



MORNING STAR PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

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Kia Oar! 您好, Welcome to Morning Star Preschool

Your child's early years are very important and you can be confident that you have chosen a great centre for your child.

Included in this handbook are some information that will help you and your child settle in easily into our centre.

Morning Star Preschool is a private, licensed Early Childhood Centre complied with the Education Regulations as well as other legislation covering public places. It is licensed for 30 children age 2 through 5 years. The centre is required by the Ministry of Education to develop and implement a range of policy that governs our practices. These are available in the policy folder at the centre.

“The service is well placed to promote positive outcomes for children. It’s strong vision and purpose informs its strategic direction and guides centre operations to ensure good quality outcomes for children who attend”.

----Education Review Report (10 September 2012)

Hours

The centre is open Monday to Friday from 7.30-5.30pm. We close for all Statutory Holidays and a Teacher Only Day, every year on the Thursday before Good Friday. Furthermore, we close two weeks over Christmas/New Year – dates for this holiday will be published by 1st November each year. A 50% of tuition fees will apply.

We ask for your co-operation in dropping off and collecting children within our operating hours. If at any time you have an emergency and are going to be delayed, please contact the Centre. Staff can then allay your child's concerns and make plans for their own commitments. A late fee may apply if your child is left at the Centre after closing time.

Morning Star philosophy

Vision statement

Morning Star Preschool will provide for families and their children a friendly, homely environment to enhance the abilities and skills of the whole child, including their physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, linguistic and spiritual development.

Philosophy

Our centre's vision emphasises the family, which is the homeliness of our Centre. We emphasise the important role the centre plays in nurturing and educating the children in our care. We view children development in a holistic way with a special focus on language and numeracy. Therefore, as a team, we believe and value principles and practices that best support our vision and the developmental needs of our children.

As a team, we value...

- **Te Tiriti O Waitangi** and therefore we are committed to meeting the obligations of The Treaty of Waitangi. We respect New Zealand as the home of Maori language and culture and that curricula in early childhood settings should promote te reo and nga tikanga Maori, making them visible and

affirming their value for children from all cultural backgrounds.

- **An equitable opportunity for learning** irrespective of gender, ability, age, ethnicity or background
- **Family** and therefore we view 2parents/ whanau as first teachers. We welcome and encourage family contribution to their child's learning and respect the aspirations of parents and families for their children. A core feature of this is effective partnership with parents/whanau, therefore, we encourage open and honest communications between staff and parents/caregivers to help enhance our children's education
- **The individual** child within the context of the family and the community, therefore, we acknowledge and support children's individual learning styles
- **The culture** of each child attending the Centre, therefore, we provide opportunities for presenting relevant cultural activities
- **Language** because it is crucial for children to learn about and understand culture, therefore, we believe in honouring the cultural diversity in New Zealand through the inclusion of all languages in the community
- **Numeracy** and therefore we foster the development of children's early numeracy and mathematical knowledge. We provide opportunities for children to engage in developmentally appropriate activities for mathematical learning
- **Technology** and therefore we provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to engage with information and computer technologies
- **Relationships** and therefore we foster positive interactions, and we support conflict resolution
- **Empowerment & exploration** and therefore we offer choices to children, promote and invite participation and positive encouragement, praise children for their efforts and allow children time and space to learn. We also offer opportunities for children to observe, perceive, explore, investigate, imagine and problem solve through play
- **Environment** and therefore we create a fun learning and stimulating

environment that is both challenging and aesthetic

- **The development of responsibility** and therefore we encourage children to take care of their environment and materials and to develop self-help skills, such as eating, toileting, dressing and cleaning
- **Being responsive** to the needs of the community and abiding by the relevant laws and policies that relate to the provision of quality children's services

Our centre follows the Principles, Strands and Goals of Te Whāriki – He Whāriki Mātauranga mo nga Mokopuna o Aotearoa – Early Childhood Curriculum.

- The Early Childhood curriculum will empower the child to learn and grow;
- The Early Childhood curriculum will reflect the holistic way children learn and grow;
- The wider world of the family and community is an integral part of the Early Childhood curriculum;
- Children will learn through responsive and reciprocal relations with people, places and things

Our aim is for children to grow up as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society.

Orientation and settling

We ask that children visit the Centre prior to attending. We ensure that at least one staff member greets the child and creates a relationship with the family and the child. Detailed discussions on the child's development, behaviour, learning preference, sleeping and eating requirements are held upon enrolment.

Parents are encouraged to stay with their child to settle him or her into the Centre, and to demonstrate that they feel happy and comfortable with their child's environment. Children are welcome to bring their own (named) 'cuddly', blanket, or special toy

from home during this settling period. However, all care but no responsibility is taken.

We enjoy visits from grandparents, younger and older brothers, sisters, and friends once your child has settled.

Parent involvement

We operate an open door policy, where parents and family are welcome into the Centre at any time. Parent participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support them and are part of the child care environment. The staff sincerely wishes for you and your child to be happy and feel welcomed at our Centre. Be aware that a three-way relationship between parents, educators and the child exists in this setting. Communication is a vital ingredient to the success of this partnership.

Staff

Morning Star is an equal opportunities employer, committed to staffing the Centre with skilled caring people. The centre has fully qualified staff and staff who are in training. Staff also participate in professional development.

Our adult/child ratio is regulated by the Ministry of Education. The staff required to work with the child is 1 adult to 10 over 2 year old children. We provide better than this ratio on our everyday practice.

Students, volunteers and visitors

From time to time, you will see new faces at the centre. Relief staff and volunteers are screened before participating in our daily activities and must adhere to our philosophy whilst at the Centre. At no stage will a volunteer worker be left in charge of a group of children. However, they will interact with the children, giving help and attention as needed. Early Childhood teacher training students also supervised at the Centre during the practical component of their course.

Fees

Please refer to the fee schedule that is attached to your child's Enrolment Form. Invoices are issued weekly or monthly. For the smooth running of the Centre, it is very important that your fees are kept at least two weeks in advance.

If you are experiencing difficulties with payment of fees or changing your payment schedule please advise us as soon as possible to avoid incurring additional charges of 2.5% to your account. Cash, cheque and internet banking are acceptable.

When two or more siblings attend Morning Star for four or more days each per week a 10% discount applies to the fees of the second and subsequent children. However, the discount does not apply to children who have opted into the 20 Hour ECE scheme. Furthermore, discounts only apply to fees paid in advance – if fees go into arrears no discounts will apply.

20 hours ECE

Our Centre offers the 20 hours ECE subsidy, which is provided by the Ministry of Education to all 3, and 4 year old children. To be eligible you must complete an Attestation form which confirms your attendance and that you are not attending another early childhood centre at the same time as you have applied for funding at our centre. If you change your enrolment hours or days you must complete another form. You may apply this subsidy from more than one centre, but you must indicate this on your form. You may apply for the 20 hours subsidy and receive money from Work and Income, but we recommend that you discuss this with your case officer.

Childcare subsidy

Work and Income operates a subsidy for parents whose children attend the Centres. The subsidy is subject to an income qualification. Contact Work and Income for further information and forms. Full payment of fees is the caregiver's responsibility and

will be required until a subsidy has been approved.

Attendance

A responsible adult known to the staff must bring children into the Centre. Only authorized persons (as indicated on the enrolment form) will be allowed to collect children from the Centre. Please notify the Centre Manager in writing of any changes to the adult. An adult other than one known to the Centre requires identification (preferably photographic). Parents with custody orders must provide a copy to the Centre manager.

In the case of a non-custodial parent arriving to collect the child, the Centre will contact the police and provide the copy of the order for the police to enforce. A child will not be allowed to go home with a parent/guardian in contravention of a custody/court order held at the Centre. However, in the event of a non-custodial parent gaining access to a child, the Centre cannot be held liable. Staff are always concerned about your child's welfare, so if you are aware of any intending absence could you please inform the Centre. Parents must give at least two weeks' notice before withdrawing their child and at least one week's notice if you wish to change your days. Change in days must be in writing. Please ask the Manager for the appropriate form.

Programme

Our Centre provides child-centered developmental programmes. The programming is based on observing children on a regular basis, evaluating their needs and planning activities from these observations. We aim to develop programmes to meet the children's needs and therefore enhance individual development. Each child will be guided to develop at an individual pace according to his or her unique, individual way. Programmes are evaluated on a regular basis and are founded on the guiding

principles of Te Whaariki, the early childhood curriculum of the Ministry of Education. Our practices reflect the multicultural heritage of our community, and emphasize non-gender stereotyped behaviour. We recognize that early childhood education facilitates the development of confidence, independence, and an interest in learning for our children. Indoor and outdoor experiences are an integral part of our programme and routine. Play is central to children's development by providing opportunities for both structured and spontaneous activities. Play is a child's unique way to learn about their world. It is also a means of expressing knowledge from previous experience. We aim to provide opportunities for boys and girls to play freely regardless of any stereotype roles they may choose. Routines give children a sense of the passage of time as they move through the day. Routines encourage independence and an understanding of personal hygiene.

We endeavour to provide an atmosphere that is warm, accepting and welcoming to both children and their families as our emphasis on maintaining a home-like environment.

Children are responsible for tidying up and putting away as they finish their creations and at the end of the day.

Profiles

Each child will have a portfolio based on "Learning Story" under the New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum "Te-Whariki". This is about your child and their development.

Ongoing evaluation of our programme and children's needs is done by observation, planning, discussion and review between staff and parents so that appropriate learning is occurring.

Our older children have a "Fun@Four" program to extend their learning, meet their expanding capabilities and provide a

smooth transition to school. This will be based from children interests and may include writing, mathematics, science, art & crafts and cooking. There will be a workbook to take home on a regular basis to be viewed and shared with parents and bring back. Please encourage your child to share what they have learnt.

Teachers are available throughout the day to discuss your child/ren and share information with parents/whanau/caregiver, or come and make an appointment to meet us at the centre – your questions, opinions and involvement in this centre are valued and very welcome.

Behaviour management

Our teachers are required to model pro-social skills at all times. Affection, acceptance and achievement are our daily goals for each child. Our philosophy is that each child has unique individual potential, which requires nurturing through effective guidance rather than discipline.

Procedures and strategies for managing behavior:

- Re-direction of behavior, i.e., guide child towards more appropriate activity.
- Always offer the child an explanation of why certain behavior is unacceptable.
- Allowing the child time to correct his or her behavior, i.e., "I will have to put the paints away if you continue to use them in that way."
- Removing the toy, activity or object that is central to the inappropriate behavior after a warning has been given.
- Extremely inappropriate behavior may result in 'exclusionary time-out', i.e., if behavior is distracting or upsetting other children, a teacher will go with the child and together they will have some time away from the other children.
- Teachers will always talk in terms of behavior, i.e., 'good behavior' or

‘unacceptable behavior.’ In this way, behavior and not the child will be rejected.

- Teachers will work together with parents to individualize behavior management plans where appropriate.
- Parents are always notified of the occurrence of any extremely inappropriate behavior and the methods used to modify it.
- Teachers recognize the need for consistency in dealing with all inappropriate behaviors.
- We are a “no hitting” zone. This applies to children, teachers, parents, and visitors to the centre

Food

Good nourishing healthy food is a major requirement for children’s growth and development. The centre encourages the parents to provide nutritional food in their lunch boxes so that children will have an opportunity to have nutritional healthy diet throughout the day. Any junk food brought by the children would be sent home especially chips, lollies and juices. Children with poor appetites will be given extra help and encouragement to eat well.

We provide children healthy and nutritional snack at morning and afternoon tea, the snack menu is reviewed on an annual basis.

International food day

On every 1st Wednesday of the month, the children experience different foods from diverse culture of the centre. On the day, please DO NOT bring lunch for the children, as they will be encouraged to make the food for lunch with the teachers or parents. Please talk with the teachers if you have any good ideas or recipes, would love to share with us. Also please let us know if your child/ren is allergic to any food.

Toileting

Routine toileting times are provided before meals and naps to encourage good habits and independence in children who are ready. During toilet training, staff will endeavour to support efforts made at home. Please feel free to discuss any special needs with staff. Please make sure you send plenty of changes of clothes during this time, as a few accidents are unavoidable. Parents must supply sufficient nappies for their child’s day (this may vary from 4 to 8) as the Centre keeps only a limited emergency supply on hand. All nappies must be disposable.

Rest/Nap

All children are offered the opportunity to have a special time to relax or rest during the day; it enables them to gather their thoughts and strength for the rest of the day. It is our policy that if a child falls asleep, they are in need of a rest and will not be woken unless parents have requested otherwise.

Clothing

All clothing, shoes, cuddles and bags must be clearly named, because play and exploration can often be wet or messy, children should be dressed in old or play clothes and a spare change should be packed every day. In winter, rain attire and

gumboots are essential, and in summer, sunhats are to be provided for outdoor play and we recommend you apply sun block to your child before the start of every day.

What to bring

Parents need to bring the following items

1. A named schoolbag
2. Nappies if still needed
3. Complete change of clothes (more when toilet training)
4. Special items for sleep i.e. cuddly, doll etc.
5. Sunhat

Toys and other treasures from home

We have chosen a wide range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys for our Centres. It would be appreciated if parents can explain to their children that the toys at the Centre are for everyone to share and that they cannot be taken home. It would be appreciated if your child could be dissuaded from bringing in toys. Cuddly or security toys are welcome but need to be clearly named. If you have any tapes that you would like to have played during rest time, please bring them in and we will be happy to play them for your child.

Workbag

The folder bag will be sent home with your child on a regular basis. Enclosed are workbooks and artworks for you to view your child learning. Do take time to sit with your child to share what they have learnt. Please make sure the folder bag returned with your child.

Lost property

At Centre there is a container for unnamed and lost property. It would be appreciated if parents could check this regularly as the amount builds up. Items that are still uncollected after a period are donated to a local charity.

Excursions / trips

Excursions out of the Centre will be arranged from time to time as part of your child's experience. Parents are encouraged to be part of the outing. Excursion slips outlining the trip, transport, cost and adult / child ratio will be given to all parents to complete prior to an outing. Children who are unable to attend the excursion will remain at the Centre with a trained staff member.

Children may be taken on small walks out of the Centre. Approval for these is given when completing the enrolment form.

Emergency & evacuation procedures

In case of an unforeseen emergency situation, every effort will be made to contact parents to collect their child. The Centre is fitted with safety devices, which are maintained regularly. Regular fire drills are necessary for regulation purposes.

If you are present at a fire drill, you are required by law to participate. Emergency evacuation plans are displayed in the Centre. Staff are familiar with evacuation procedures and policies. Parents and visitors to the Centre will be asked to make themselves familiar with the evacuation plan and where hoses and first aid equipment is to be found. Every effort will be made to make evacuation procedures enjoyable rather than stressful events for the children. Regular emergency procedures give the children an opportunity to become familiar with the routine and planned evacuation.

Safety

Centre policies on safety precautions are continually reinforced by staff and children. Such practices include:

- ❖ The storage of chemicals in locked cupboards
- ❖ Checking the safety of sandpits and outdoor equipment
- ❖ Children's awareness of personal safety, i.e. not throwing equipment and walking inside
- ❖ There is always someone trained in first aid on site; first aid certificates are renewed every two years

Child health

We ask that any child who is unwell be kept at home so illness does not spread through the Centre. The Manager may at his discretion refuse to accept any child deemed unwell enough to attend the Centre, as we do not have the specialist staff or the space for sick children. Children with severe coughs or colds, vomiting, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis, rashes or raised temperatures cannot be brought into the Centre. If symptoms develop during the day the parent will be contacted to arrange for the immediate collection of their child.

WHEN IS A CHILD INFECTIOUS?

Common infectious diseases

1. **Measles:** infectious up to four days after rash has first appeared.
2. **Mumps:** infectious up to three days after swelling has disappeared.
3. **Chickenpox:** infectious until last spot is covered by a scab.
4. **Whooping Cough:** infectious until at least one month after onset.
5. **Rubella (German Measles):** infectious up to four days from when rash first appeared.

Common contagious parasitic conditions

1. **Headlice:** Please check your child's head regularly and treat immediately if headlice are found. Once a child has been treated she/he may attend even if eggs are still present in the hair.
2. **Threadworms:** difficult to prevent the spread. Usual signs are irritability and an itchy bottom.
3. **Scabies:** an itchy skin condition, which can be difficult to diagnose. A doctor should be consulted on any doubtful rash.

Infectious skin conditions

1. Impetigo

Bacterial skin infection, which is highly contagious. A doctor must be consulted on any multiple sores. If on the face, the child should stay at home until no longer infectious. If on other parts of the body, sores should be properly covered.

2. Ringworm

Fungal skin condition. Advisable to consult a doctor for the confirmation of diagnosis and treatment. Please keep lesions covered when your child is at the Centre.

N.B. Any skin condition persisting for more than 24 hours requires a medical opinion.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea

Can be a serious health risk to babies. A baby should be seen by a doctor immediately. If a child has diarrhoea: keep him/her at home for a minimum of 24 hours; give only fluid for 24 hours (10 mls per 10 minutes is recommended); then gradually introduce a light diet. If the diarrhoea still persists, a doctor should be consulted. If your child has both vomiting and diarrhoea the exclusion period is a minimum of 48 hours. The Centre should be

advised if the child has contracted a notifiable or infectious disease such as Giardia, mumps, chickenpox etc so that other parents can be advised. The child should be kept away from the Centre for the required length of time as per the communicable diseases chart, which is on display in the Centre.

Medication

Please advise the staff if your child is taking any medication. All medicines must be kept in the kitchen and the medicine book that is kept beside the sign in sheet must be filled in before we can administer any medication. Only medication that has a label stating your child's name and expiry date will be administered. The Centre keeps a first aid kit, which includes some non-prescription and homeopathic medications for emergencies. Please advise the Manager if you would prefer these were not given to your child.

Immunisation

We are required to keep an up-to-date list of all children at the Centre and their immunisation status. Please remember to bring your Well Child Book and a copy of your immunisation certificate with you when you enrol your child at the Centre. If your child is not immunised, a letter confirming this needs to be attached to your Enrolment Form. In the case of an outbreak of such a disease your child will be asked to stay away from the Centre for the duration of the outbreak.

Communication

All parents are required to sign their child in and out of the Centre every day on the signing table. This is a legal requirement by the Ministry of Education and can be audited at any time to ensure compliance with our roll returns (the bases of bulk funding). It is also a safety requirement in case of emergency evacuation of the Centre therefore a very important part of your drop off and pick up routine. Parents are kept

informed of Centre activities through newsletters, notices posted at the front door and information on the parent's notice board. While verbal reminders on your child's needs and dispositions are appreciated any special notes can be made in the **parent communication book** to ensure nothing is overlooked.

Parking

There are ample parking spaces provided at the back of the centre down the driveway or off street parking when dropping and collecting your child at the centre. For safety and hazard reasons, please DO NOT PARK in front of the main gate entrance.

Concerns and complaints

Parents should feel free to discuss any queries or problems with the staff. However, remember that busy drop off or pick up times may not always be an appropriate time to have detailed discussions on your child's or your needs, and you may need to schedule an appointment with the Centre at another time. A policy for dealing with complaints is displayed on the centre compliance board. Your participation in the running of the Centre is welcomed and will help to ensure your family enjoys their early childhood Experience.

MORNING STAR PRESCHOOL